

**ROSEVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES FOR
SEPTEMBER 2, 2025 6:30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Her, Kooistra, Matts-Benson,
Penny.
ABSENT: Arneson, Boulton.
STAFF: Johnson.

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call Commissioners: Arneson, Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Kooistra,
Matts-Benson, Penny.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Botzek moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner
Donaldson seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Her, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

3. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public chose to speak, as all were present in relation to items on the agenda.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Penny moved to approve the August 7, 2025, minutes. Commissioner
Harris seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Her, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a) **DISCUSS AND CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE ALDINE STREET RIGHT OF WAY**

Staff provided background information on the Commission's initial discussion of the Aldine Street right-of-way (ROW), which took place at the August 7, 2025 Parks and Recreation meeting. Since that time, the following actions have been completed:

- Several commissioners toured the site.
- Staff prepared site inventories of trees and topography.
- Staff researched accessibility requirements and tree preservation.

Staff emphasized that the Commission's goal is to work toward an eventual recommendation for the City Council.

The Commission reviewed the list of questions provided by the City Council, noting that not all questions need to (or can) be answered immediately. These questions include:

- Should the ROW become a park trail?
- Does it provide recreational value?
- How many trees impacted/removed?
- Detailed impacts on vegetation and trees?
- Neighborhood engagement process?
- Use Park Dedication funds?
- Does a 30-foot-wide park make sense in Roseville?

Staff presented the results of the site analysis, which included the following findings:

- 57 inventoried trees, including 24 with a trunk diameter greater than 10" DBH (Diameter at Breast Height, the standard measurement).
- 7 large oaks measuring over 20" DBH.
- 8 invasive green ash trees (estimated removal cost: \$3,000–\$5,000).
- Ground cover primarily consists of invasive buckthorn.
- Encroachments reduce overall accessibility.
- The right-of-way is located near several homes, with one as close as 18 feet.
- **Preliminary Analysis:** Informal trail routes appear possible with limited impact.

Because the right-of-way would serve as a community connective trail, it must comply with PROWAG (Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines) standards, which include:

- A firm and stable surface.
- Maximum slope of 5% and maximum cross slope of 2%.
- Minimum width of 48 inches, with designated passing spaces.
- Required curb cuts and ramps.
- Use of a non-bituminous path is possible.

As part of the tree inventory, staff identified several considerations regarding tree preservation at the site:

- Key concern: large oak trees, with current conditions mixed and in some cases unknown.
- Risks: potential damage from soil compaction, grading, and heavy traffic.
- A traditional trail design would likely result in significant tree loss.
- A non-traditional approach could reduce overall impacts.
- **Possible next step:** engage an arborist and engineer to determine the potential best trail route and ways to mitigate tree loss.

The Commission reviewed the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan guidance for pedestrian community connections, focusing on Goals 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6. Staff noted that the Master Plan identified this right-of-way segment as a potential “constellation link,” a conceptual connector intended to support system-wide recreation access. However, this segment was not identified as a priority route in the City’s Pathway Master Plan, which serves as the guide for future pathway projects.

Staff reviewed metrics related to park access impacts for the right-of-way:

- The ROW is located within Constellation K.
- Closest Park: Evergreen Park (Community Park).
 - Distance via ROW: 0.51 miles.
 - Distance via streets: 0.69 miles.
- The Mid Oaks neighborhood falls outside the Trust for Public Land (TPL) 10-minute walk-to-a-park radius goal. Currently, 94% of Roseville residents fall within the TPL 10-minute walk-to-a-park standard.
 - Evergreen Park (via Fairview): 0.86 miles.
 - Falcon Heights Community Park: 0.86 miles.
 - Evergreen Park (via ROW): 0.68 miles.
- The Commission reviewed existing pedestrian connections near the ROW

Staff reviewed potential cost considerations for the right-of-way:

- Hardscape path: \$84,000–\$177,000.
- Non-concrete path: \$20,000–\$60,000 (including design and site work).
- Volunteers and staff could assist with clearing invasive species and creating informal paths.
- Engineering work would still be required to address slopes and accessibility.

The Commission revisited several questions that had been discussed at the previous meeting:

- Other neighborhood connections were created during the platting process.
- The Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) can make a recommendation without the ROW becoming a park.
- The PRC may provide advice on community engagement and implementation.
- Flooding risk is considered minimal with appropriate mitigation.

- If the ROW were vacated, ownership would transfer to adjacent neighbors, and the City would no longer have control.
- A potential crosswalk at Roselawn would require review and approval by both the City and Falcon Heights.

Staff reviewed the next potential steps, possible recommendations, and additional considerations with the Commission:

- Joint meeting with the City Council scheduled for September 15, 2025.
- At that meeting, the Commission could:
 - Provide an update on progress.
 - Share recommendations (if ready).
 - Propose next steps.
 - Seek clarification from the Council.
- Possible Recommendations: Recommendation One
 - Does ROW provide parks and recreation value?
 - Yes → move to Recommendation Two
 - No → Option 1: Vacate
 - No → Option 2: Retain without change
- Possible Recommendations: Recommendation Two
 - If the parcel has Parks and Recreation value, what should happen next?
 1. Study alignment/tree impacts
 2. Begin non-traditional trail planning
 3. Begin hardscape path planning
 4. No trail; vacate ROW
 5. Take no action now, but preserve ROW for future
- Additional Considerations
 - Convert ROW to parkland (pending legal review)?
 - Use Park Dedication funds?
 - Does the Commission have feedback on an implementation method?

The Commission discussed whether there is a precedent for right-of-way land being used as a park or trail. Staff noted that precedent does exist: some ROW segments have been used to provide access to parks, and natural spaces are also part of the City's Park System. However, this parcel would be unique as it would be the smallest in the system and the only one to potentially combine both uses.

Vice-Chair Beckmann asked if there was an estimated cost for an arborist to assess the trees. Staff responded that they anticipated the cost would range from \$500 to \$2,000, depending on the level of detail required in the assessment.

Commissioner Donaldson asked how the trail would be maintained in the winter. Staff acknowledged that it could be difficult to plow an unpaved, winding trail during winter months.

Commissioner Penny asked about existing encroachments and how they would be addressed. Staff explained that, under City policy, homeowners are responsible for removing encroachments at their own expense.

The Commission also discussed potential concerns related to the site's trees, particularly the oak and box elder species.

J. Reinart, 1667 Ridgewood

J. Reinart, 1667 Ridgewood, spoke in strong support of saving the path. He noted that he does not have a preference for the type of trail surface but emphasized the importance of maintaining the connection. He shared that his own use of nearby walking paths has decreased and expressed concern that removing this path would be a disservice to the broader Roseville community. Noting that the path connects the neighborhood to key city amenities, including parks, trails, and the local school. He reaffirmed that retaining the pathway is in the best interest of the City and that the trees along the ROW can be protected while preserving access.

A. Lottie, 90 Mid Oaks Ln.

A. Lottie, 90 Mid Oaks Lane, shared her support for retaining the path. She explained that she previously lived on the ROW, moved away, and later returned to the neighborhood nearby because her family missed Roseville and the community. She emphasized that this is not about creating a new path but about improving an existing one that already serves as a quiet, shared space connecting neighbors.

Ms. Lottie noted that the path provided her children with a safe, more direct route to Brimhall School, which they could take independently because they knew the neighbors along the ROW. While other routes exist, they are farther and less safe, as they require crossing Roselawn Avenue or walking along the Snelling Avenue frontage road, which is both busy and in poor condition.

She expressed appreciation for the City's efforts to study the land carefully and to prioritize tree protection. Her hope is that some form of the longstanding neighborhood path can be retained, as it is important not only to current residents but also to future neighbors. With the school year beginning, she reiterated how much her family misses the path, as her children especially prefer walking to school, rather than riding the bus, even during the winter months.

S. Quinn, 89 Mid Oak

S. Quinn, 89 Mid Oaks Lane, spoke in opposition to converting the ROW into a park. She stated that her home abuts the property and that she did not purchase her home with the expectation of living next to a park, noting that she likely would not have purchased it had that been the case.

Ms. Quinn expressed disappointment that the Commission packet did not address how converting the ROW to a public park would impact surrounding neighbors. She emphasized that 21 residents (soon to be 24) live in adjacent homes, and their loss of privacy was not highlighted.

She further raised concerns about long-term tree damage, noting that the driplines of many mature trees extend beyond the proposed 30-foot path. She stated that no treatment could fully

prevent tree loss if roots are disturbed. Ms. Quinn also referenced recent City Communications celebrating an award for natural resources management, which highlighted the importance of preservation.

She urged the Commission to prioritize saving both the mature trees and the privacy of the abutting neighbors, who did not expect or want to live next to a park.

O. Gault, 2021 Herschel St.

O. Gault, 2021 Herschel Street, spoke in favor of retaining the path. She noted that she walks the path year-round and, although it has never been shoveled, neighbors continue to use it in the winter. She emphasized that residents are not asking for anything new but simply want to continue using the existing walking path, which she has relied on for the 30 years she has lived in the neighborhood.

Ms. Gault explained that she was unaware until the initial vacate notice that some abutting property owners did not want people walking on the ROW. In response to the closing of the path she created an on-line petition, and within one week it received 98 signatures representing 68 households, all supporting the continuation of the path.

She expressed regret that the issue has become divisive between abutting homeowners and the rest of the neighborhood. However, she emphasized her hope that both the path and the greenspace can be preserved.

D. Urswell, 1731 Shryer

D. Urswell, 1731 Shryer Avenue, spoke in favor of preserving the path. She expressed concern for children living on Mid Oaks, noting that without the path they cannot move between neighborhoods without running across busy streets. She emphasized that the path has served as a well-established neighborhood connection for more than 30 years and that it is unfair to isolate children by removing it.

Ms. Urswell stated that children should have the opportunity to take the healthier route of walking along the path, rather than being forced to rely on motor vehicles to travel between neighborhoods or access local community amenities.

J. Pribyl, 1738 Skillman Ave.

J. Pribyl, 1738 Skillman Avenue, spoke in support of the path. He stated that he enjoys using the path and appreciates that this unique situation is being given thoughtful and creative consideration. He noted that the path serves as a connector between neighborhoods as well as to the University of Minnesota agricultural fields, which welcome walkers and provides a large open space for recreation that his family takes advantage of often.

Mr. Pribyl also highlighted the importance of the trees, noting that they have long existed alongside and within the ROW. He expressed appreciation that everyone's input is being considered and that the process has allowed neighbors to hear and understand each other's perspectives.

A. Quinn, 89 Mid Oak

A. Quinn, 89 Mid Oaks Lane, emphasized that the situation has changed since he purchased his home. He noted that the size of the right-of-way has decreased over time and that there have been concerns with unwanted activity in the area. He also pointed out that portions of the existing path are located on private property, meaning the path cannot remain in its current location and would need to change. He added that any changes would affect the trees and observed that everyone seems to be in agreement about the importance of preserving them.

The Commission acknowledged that there are valid points on both sides of the issue. Commissioners emphasized the importance of protecting the privacy of adjacent neighbors while also recognizing the value of maintaining neighborhood connections to parks and trails.

The Commission discussed and agreed that the ROW provides Parks and Recreation value, noting that this has been acknowledged historically as the Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified the right-of-way segment as a potential “constellation link.” Commissioners also discussed whether the property would be best classified as a park or as a right-of-way, and how that decision could impact the preservation of trees. In addition, the Commission considered how future property ownership changes could affect both the neighborhood and its natural resources.

Commissioner Donaldson moved to recommend to the City Council that the Parks and Recreation Commission acknowledges that the Aldine right-of-way has value for the Parks and Recreation System. Commissioner Kooistra seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: Her.

The Commission discussed potential options for moving forward with a recommendation to the City Council, emphasizing that tree preservation should remain a top priority. Commissioners agreed that a non-traditional pathway would be the most favorable option, as it would have the least impact on the trees, unless a detailed study determined that the existing trees are not viable.

Chair Matts-Benson moved that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that the City Council direct staff to, as expeditiously as possible, engage with a third party to conduct a detailed study of a non-traditional path that includes:

1. Pathway alignment options and,
2. Specific tree impacts

and that a final decision be made immediately following the receipt of the study. Vice-Chair Beckmann seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Her, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Vice-Chair Beckmann moved to wait to discuss the “additional considerations” until the feasibility study has been conducted. Chair Matts-Benson seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Her, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

b) PREPARE FOR JOINT MEETING WITH THE CITY COUNCIL ON SEPT. 15, 2025

The Commission reviewed the PowerPoint presentation prepared by staff for the upcoming joint meeting with the City Council.

Commissioners discussed who would lead the discussion for each topic and what information should be included in the presentation. Specifically, they suggested having the Park Tour, Campus Master Plan, Recreation Program Quality, and the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan on the “Other Discussion Topics” slide. They also recommended highlighting the goals of “Supporting and grow the three Friends groups” and “Reviewing and advising on the Volunteer Program” when discussing the Parks and Recreation Commission Goals.

c) MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS CENTER UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)

Requests for Proposals (RFP) have been issued for an architect, and a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has been issued for a construction manager for the project. Proposals will be reviewed within the next week, with an anticipated recommendation to the City Council for an architect by the end of the month, followed by a recommendation for a construction manager shortly thereafter.

6. COMMISSION DIRECTION ON MEMBER INITIATED AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Penny requested adding the following items to a future Commission agenda:

- The potential of adding electric vehicle chargers as a future park amenity.
- Opportunities for collaboration between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the community group at Parkview School working on an inclusive playground.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

a) DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

- The summer concert series *Live at the Rog* and summer recreation programs have concluded. Attendance numbers were very strong, and community feedback was overwhelmingly positive.
- Golftoberfest will be held on September 19 at the Cedarholm Community Building and Golf Course.
- FOR Parks: Tapped and Uncorked fundraising event will take place on September 19 at the John Rose MN OVAL.
- The Natural Resources Volunteer Event (invasive species removal) will be held at Cottontail Park on September 20.
- The Wild Rice Festival is scheduled for September 27 at the Harriet Alexander Nature Center.

b) OTHER NEW OR RELEVANT COMMUNICATION ITEMS

8. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Christensen, Parks and Recreation Department Assistant